

THE SECRET FIRE = SUBLIMATE OF MERCURY

Nodus Sophicus Enodatus

Our Philosophical mercurial water [secret Fire] is the Key whereby all coagulated fixt and unfixed metallic and mineral bodies are radically and physically dissolved and reduced into their first principle. This mercurial water has been kept very secret by all the philosophers, as the secret of the whole art.

Dienheim

When this spirit [Mercury] has been *sublimed* [converted into sublimate] it is called, *the water which washes and cleanses itself*; because [I the work] it ascends with its most subtil essence and leaves its corrupting particles behind. This ascension the Philosophers have named Distillation, Washing, Sublimation.

Flamel

Or whole secret and work is made with Our Water, and from it and by it we obtain all that we require. It dissolves the body, not by a common solution, as the ignorant think, who look for a clear water like that of rain, but by a true philosophical solution, so that the body is converted into an unctuous and viscous water [azoth] out of which the metals were originally formed.

Nodus Sophicus Enodatus

How this *philosophical water or fire, water of mercury*, is to be prepared, the philosophers have carefully hidden. Raymond Lully has written better of it than others, but in a disguised manner.

Flamel

The life of all things is *the water*. His water makes a solution of the body, and the spirit [rebis] and gives life to dead things.

Mathaeus Erben von Brandau

Whoever wishes to work by my advice... let him learn to make *vitriol* and *nitre*, before he attempts this secret work, otherwise he will fail in practice. [He means the Sophic vitriol, Sublimed Mercury, in which, however, there is no vitriolic acid. Several salts were anciently called vitriols to which that name is not now given].

Anonymous *Verbum Dismissum*

The quicksilver used by Philosophers is purified from its terrestrial stench and filth by a philosophical *sublimation*.

Artephius

The whole of this secret is... Antimony and a *mercurial sublimate*.

Radix Chymiae

When Mercury is sublimated with Roman or blue Vitriol and common salt, the mercury ascends from them snow white, and carries up with him the Quinta Essentia of the Vitriol, so that in such a sublimate the Quinta Essentia of Vitriol is invisibly concealed, although the sublimate appears snow-white [such was the opinion of the old chemists]. If you want this mercury to conquer the Gold he requires seven or nine Eagles, that is: 7 or 9 *sublimations*. [We know that when rightly performed one sublimation makes it as perfect as a hundred].

Dr T.M. Faustius

The clearest and best description how to prepare the secret Fire, according to the practice of former times: Sublimed Mercury is dissolved in Aquafort, the Aquafort is then distilled from it, and the calx is sublimated snow-white --- and there remains behind, in the bottom of the vessel part of the Mercury burnt and foul. The pure Sublimate, is dissolved again in fresh Aquafort, distilled and sublimed again, and this purification and sublimation is repeated 3 times, or until after sublimation no faeces are left behind --- and this they called *quinta essentia mercurii et vitrioli*, and of the same nature as gold. [All that is wanted is a pure muriate, or oxymuriate of mercury]..

Artephius

Our *moist fire*, by dissolving and *subliming* that which is pure and white, casts forth or rejects, its faeces or filth, like a voluntary vomit... The pure and white substance ascends upwards, and the impure and earthly remains fixed in the bottom... This must be taken away and removed because it is of no value, taking only the middle white substance, rejecting the foeculous earth which remains below, [and also any light flowers which may rise into the neck of the subliming vessel]. The clear, white, pure, and clean matter is wholly and only to be taken and made use of...

This *sublimation* is without doubt, the Key of the whole work... In this *whiteness* [Sublimation] the Antimonial and Mercurial soul, is by a natural compact infused into and joined with the spirits of Sol and our Luna... In this *whiteness* is the soul infused into the body [this is the priest that joins the male and female in an indissoluble union]... and in this is our Philosophical sublimation [effected], not in the impure Mercury of the vulgar, which has none of the properties which adorn our mercury drawn from is vitriolic

caverns [sublimed from salt and vitriol, as was anciently the practice --- *vitriol* being then considered indispensably necessary].

It is most certain therefore in this art that the soul extracted from the bodies [Gold and our Luna] cannot be made to ascend, but by adding to it a volatile matter [our secret Fire].

Eyraeneus Philaletha

I will tell thee, and that faithfully, what kind of water this is, it is the water of *Salt Peter, which is known as Mercury*. [It is a salt white like Salt Peter, but known to be mercurial}... Our water is truly pontick. Serene, *Christaline*... we make it by art [by sublimation]... Whosoever hath once made up our water nothing remains to be done but to cast in a clean body [rebis] in a just quantity, shut the vessel and so let it stand till the complement of the work.

Water Stone of the Wise

The Philosophers have written much of a *vaporous* water, which they have called the *fire of Wisdom*, and they have said that this is *material* or *elemental*, but [yet] an *essential* or *supernatural* fire, sometimes called a *Divine fire* --- this is our *aqua Mercurii*, which is excited by the help of common external heat, administered by Art.

Eyraeneus Philaletha

Especially and before all things be careful in your *internal heat*, viz., the proportion of your water [the Philosophical mercurial Water] for your sulphur [Sol]. This you must add and supply to it in the beginning of your work... This performs all the work within, and without this your external heat is of no value.

Benedictus Figulus

When the Philosophers speak of mercury, understand *our mercury*; by the water understand Mercury *sublimated from its proper salt and coagulated into a salt* [Sublimed Mercury].

Clangor Buccinae

The Water [secret Fire] is the *Spirit* which purifies, subtilizes, and whitens the body.

Ludus Puerorum

The Water is purifying and is the efficient cause of the purity of the whole body and of the Medicine. The water [secret Fire] operates two things in the *earth* [rebis]. It washes and tinges it. While it washes it is called water, and when it tinges it is called Air.

Incertus

Distilled Vinegar is not the Vinegar of the Philosophers. Their most sharp vinegar is the secret Fire, which extracts the essence from antimony that is from the Regulus of Antimony and Mars and forms Azoth.

Pandora

I [says Mercury] am the Father of all the metals, a viscous water and a sulphurous earth. I am found in the depths of the mines, where I was born: from me do all metals proceed. When I am in my natural running form, common quicksilver, I perform some operations; but were I sublimed I could perform wonderful operations... I am the *living water*, *Lac virginis*, and every secret is in me.

H. Von Batsdorff

According to the ancients, not a Balneum Maria, nor ashes, nor sand, but the Fire of the *Calx vive* [one of the names given to the secret Fire], or *the heat of our mercury* [not our Diana but the *sublimed salt*] is the right fire.

Bernard Trevisan

In our Art we employ a twofold heat --- that of *the sulphur* [Sol] and that of *the Fire* [the secret Fire] that the one may assist the other. But the fire is not of the substance of matter [not common combustible matter]... though it augments the work. Were it so it would daily increase the work [leaving an incombustible residue] which is erroneous. The fire which Nature requires governs, in a peculiar manner, the whole art, and we can add nothing else. By a vehement fire [that is combustion] the principles are not *reciprocally altered among themselves* [which is the effect sought nor are they moved. Let there be made, therefore, a fire continual [not needing to be replenished] digesting, not violent [not that of actual combustion], subtil, inclosed [viz., in the glass], aerial, surrounding [embracing the whole matter], altering and not burning. So may God love me, as I have told thee the whole construction of *the Fire*. Consider, therefore, my words and ruminate on them one by one. Verily *the Fire* comprehends the whole Art.

The Same

In our work we must attend to the weight of the sulphur in the Mercury. And since, as I have before said, the element of *fire*, which does not predominate in Mercury, *in its crude state* is the very thing that digests the matter, it is necessary that everyone, who would become a true philosopher should know how much more subtle the element of fire is than the other elements [viz., of our compound], and what proportion of it [by weight viz.] is necessary to conquer them...

Now for a conclusion... lend an attentive ear. Our work is made from one root and from *two mercurial substances*... conjoined by THE FIRE in friendship, as the matter itself requires, assiduously boiled until out of the two one is made [viz., by means of the conjunction effected by the “inclosed” secret fire].

The Same

Our *sulphur* [Sol] when it is joined with its water [our Luna] or Mercury doth by little and little consume and drink up the same *by the help of THE FIRE.*

The Same

I deny not that drossy and impure mercury may and ought, *by a simple salt*, to be *sublimed* or purged once or oftener, according to a due philosophic experience... For there are *sublimations of mercury* from its own proper bodies which are conjoined and mingled with it, by an amalgamation with it in its most inward parts, from which being oftentimes raised and reunited, rejects and loses its superfluities, and is not confounded in its nature; and afterwards it is very agreeable to the Philosophic work, and powerful to dissolve metallic species.

Ripley

Thy *water* must be seven times *sublimate*, Else shall no kindly dissolution be, Nor putrefying shall thou none see Like liquid pitch, nor colours appearing, For lack of fire within *thy glass working* ... Therefore make *fire thy glass within*, Which brenneth the bodies more than fire Elemental...

Botulphus

That gentle fire, which is the White Fire of the Philosophers; is the greatest and most principal matter of the operation of the Elements.

Laurentius Ventura

The whole art is comprehended in... Sol, Luna, and Mercury... In two of these is found the sulphur white and red... the tinging rays... but the Stone of Mercury unites and binds them both [The Stone of Mercury is the White Fire].

Leona Constantia

Everyone knows how to boil over a fire, but if they know how to *boil FIRE in water* their knowledge would shew them a different work from that of the kitchen.

Artephius

The error in this work is chiefly to be attributed to ignorance of the true fire, which is one of the moving principles that transmutes the whole matter into the true philosophers' stone... In a short time that fire, without any laying on of hands will complete the whole work... And by the means of this our fire the medicine will be multiplied --- if joined with the crude matter --- not only in quantity but also in quality or virtue. Therefore seek out this fire with all thy industry for having once found it thou shalt accomplish thy desire, because it performs the whole work, and is the true Key of all the Philosophers, which they have never yet revealed.

The Preparation of the Azoth

"Whosoever is in possession of this water is the master of this art, however, where this mercurius is missing, there the whole art is lacking."

-(*Axiomata, 1736*)

The dissolving water, as aforementioned, is not given to Human Beings by Nature, but instead this secret Spirit of Vinegar must be artfully prepared by Human Beings. The Adepts keep total

silence when it comes to the preparation, and when they talk about it, the explanations are very vague. Joh. de Monte-Snyder says this about this subject:

"Even though, for those who are experienced in this matter, I wrote too clearly, more distinct, than any other Philosophus has ever written or brought into the daylight; there is still a little bit, which I have kept from them, namely, how to make out of an unmelted, brittle, mineral Saturno such highly valuable mercurium, and how to bring this into a red Spiritum. This can only be accomplished in one way and by one means, even though I have already ignited this Light. This was done in the hope, that if God does not allow it, then this will not be understood, nor will it be remembered. This is one thing which I cannot publish through print.

-(Joh. de Monte-Snyder, Tractatus de Medicina Universali)

In order to give the true seekers and the budding discipulis et filis of the hermetic sciences a hint, we will quote Monte-Snyder:

"The Mercurius is also pure heat and fire, which keeps his corpus likewise in a constant flow; his fire however, is a mineral, metallic fire, which burns, but it does not burn up, and can only be ignited by the Philosophis through consummation and amore Veneris etc., and after that he is prepared to warm up the cold Saturnum, because from him he has to expect his coagulation and the Philosophi say:

"The Coagulation Mercurii is found in the Saturno."

Monte Snyder does not mean here, the common, but instead, the one prepared according to the art and fundamentliter reversed Venus, which turned into a mineral.

Out of this an aqua Mercurialis is made, and with the help of the Sal Ammoniac of the Philosophers (the flying dragon), is being changed into a secret fiery Spirit, into the Menstruum Universale.

The invisible Mercurius or Spirit will initially be drawn out of the darkened Saturno as perspiration. The black earth coagulates the invisible Mercurium, whereas the Mercurius in the water dissolves the black Saturnum. Through frequent ascension and descent of Nature in constant warmth, out of the black Saturno animato becomes a transparent pure and white salt. Out of the black Raven becomes a white Swan, a new illuminated spiritual body.

In fact, everything is dependent upon the preparation of the fiery Mercurial Water or Azoth. It is one of the greatest wonders in Alchemy, to distill the cold watery mundane Spirits into a fiery, lucid and penetrating Spirit, so that he is capable of radically dissolving the dark Salt-Corpus (wherein the Red Tincture is enclosed), and to change the hard stone into a viscous Water, namely into its materia prima.

"Igne Nitrum Roris Invenitur!"

In order to transform the common World-Spirit or Mercury into a fiery, penetrating and dissolving Spiritus, we must first separate him from his external phlegmatic aqueousness, namely, to separate everything that is superfluous and foreign.

Then he must also be separated from his internal impurities. In order to lead him back to his prime Nature or being, into the upper heavenly Light-Water, all connection through which he is bound to the Earth must be severed.

This process was portrayed by the ancient hermetic Philosophers in their writings in different ways, as it is shown allegorically through the distillation of the Spirit of Wine. Just as the sweet juice is pressed from Grapes, which then ferment and become wine, and through distillation becomes a volatile Spiritus or Spirit of Wine.

Furthermore, through the transformation of the sour tartar, it becomes calcareous earth and when distilled with sulfuric acid, it becomes the acrid Spirit of Vinegar. This is how (allegorically) the philosophical Spirit of Wine and Spirit of Vinegar are prepared. First the juice of the vineyard is artfully drawn out of our Subjecto (our philosophical wine) which is the rootmoisture or the virgin earth, which contains all three principles: Mercurius, Sulphur and Salt.

As soon as we have this virgin earth, this terra adamica, this spermatic Mercurial- Water, or Materia-Proxima then through philosophical distillation or through ascension, we draw out the fleeting Spirit, our white Eagle. This ascending Spirit encompasses within itself the heavenly Light seed, the Sal coeleste or the heavenly Sal nitre, and descends again with the Dew of Heaven, because he is attracted magnetically by the Virgin Earth, which is loosened by the water and swells up.

The Spirit Water enters into this loosened Earth (our Azoth), which contains within itself the Light of Heaven, which is a volatile astral Salt. This astral seed joins now with the Fire of the Anima, which is located in the inner of the virgin Earth and tinges same, that is, it ignites into Light so that the whole Soul is illuminated through the heavenly Light of the Eagle or Spirit, like through a descending lightening bolt. The ignited Anima is driven up again to its heights with the help of her two suns; the empty Spirit Water (or Phlegma), as an Eagle, where in the upper regions of the air or the Heaven it fills itself again with the Milk of the Sunlight, and with this descends again to Earth as Heavens Dew.

Since the Azoth takes, each and every time, a little bit from the substance of the fixed fire up to its heights through its volatility, it becomes more and more acrid and fiery, until it finally reaches such fieriness that it radically dissolves the firm Salt-Corpus. The whole Heavens Dew will not be coagulated to Light-Spirit-Salt in the fat of the Earth, but only the 30th part of the Azoth or the Spirit of Vinegar.

Therefore, we require for the dissolution of our materia, a large quantity of the Spirit of Vinegar, since 10 Eagles or parts of the Azoth only dissolves one part of our virgin Earth. That is why it is necessary to be imbued so many times with the Spirito aceti and a weekly gentle steaming of the Phlegma, until the subtle spiritual part in the body of the salt is fixed.

There is a foreign impure fire in the Sulphur of the Salt that eats up or corrodes the watery Venus or virgin Earth, and at the same time, it wants to change it into impure Sulphur. However, the heavenly Light, which is concealed in the watery Nitro of the Azoth, does not allow this.

The Heavenly Light that joins the male tincture, the pure fire of the Sulphur and which is effective in its earthly Nitro, separates the coarse burnable Sulphur and cleanses the lower Central-Fire, that means the Anima.

The Water is the Vehiculum of all influences, since all vapours of the earth are lead by it into the air, and everything that comes from Heaven descends into the Earth with the Dew-Water. Heavenly and earthly influences, the upper and the lower central sun, meet in this manner in the Water-Vapours. Vulcanos, the subterranean sun, drives the oily saltwater (rootmoisture) up in vapours into the upper regions of the Air or the Heaven. Here, it is impregnated by the astral influences of the same, especially by the rays of the sun and the moon.

It then descends back again to earth as Dew-Water, pregnant with the heavenly seed which it softens and dissolves, and in their Inner, the Central Sun (from the Sulphur) coagulates the Heavenly Light contained in the Azoth, because the Mercurius (Spirit) dissolves the Corpus; the Sulphur (the Soul) however, coagulates the Spirit to a Corpus.

The Eagle (Spirit) is therefore the first part that is led into the heights, Hermes subtile ascension, the Spirit of Heaven, the Fontana Bernhards. As soon as the Eagle has flown, the body or the green Lion remains behind with the enclosed Soul the Lion's blood or Gold lustre.

The Sages say: that the whole art lies within that their Gold or Sulphur also rises with it above the alembic, this does not happen with the first distillation of the Mercury. The blood of the Lion, the sort-after Red Tincture or the Seed of Gold is stuck too deep in the Earth and bound to it, the captured Soul must, through the descent of the Heavenly Eagle to Hell, be liberated from the darkness. The Azoth or the Red Eagle is also the sought-after mediator between the White Eagle and the upper Light-Spirit and the wingless earthly Dragon that is between the divine Spirit and the earthly body.

This is why, the Adept Monte-Snyder said this:

"The Azoth or the Cross will be understood through the vinegar, & hoc vice versa; through the Cross the Azoth, the Saviour will be comprehended anew, who from up above settled down on this World, and moved above the Water as the Spirit of God of the Salis sive Vitrioli & Nitri, out of which the same is born and extracted. With all this, I could easily have helped you, but I am not allowed by the Powers from up above to disclose anything further in writing."

(*Joh de Monte-Snyder, Tractatus de Medicina Universali*)

While the Azoth is dissolving the Earth through its fiery water, the Earth coagulates the Azoth at the same time; to be more specific, the most subtile part of the Azoth, so that out of two, a peculiar Middle-Substance comes into being, a thick water or a thick blackish-reddish oil, the *materia prima metallorum*.

This Mercurius *duplicatus* is now the blessed Blackness of the Philosophers, the black Raven or Laton of the Alchemists which must be whitened. In this Ravenshead or Mercury Water, the Sun and the Moon (Soul and Spirit) are being eclipsed (darkened), that means they no longer can be seen. Because when our Earth has become Water, that is when the dry Fire (Body and Soul) is being dissolved through the moistness (Spirit) then the warmth begins to become active and begins now to act in the moistness. Through this, it bears blackness in the mixed materia, which are called Sol and Luna. Whenever the Fire or the Anima is drawn out of the body, this always occurs under the sign of Blackness or Darkness.

This then is the Sun and Moon Eclipse (occultation), which means having died or passed away. Among the Seekers prevails mostly an erroneous concept, in regards to the nature of the Blackness and the alchemical colours, as well. Therefore, we will endeavour to explain the nature of these in more detail. Light and Darkness are the primordial principles of all things. All visible things of the three Kingdoms of Nature are created out of a fiery Darkness and a watery Light. The Prophet said:

"Since eternity, Light and Darkness were in God, and both those things came out of God."
-(*Isaiah 45 - 7*)

Before Creation, the Darkness was not revealed, because of the magnificence and sovereignty of the Light; it was instead concealed in the Light of Wisdom and the Holy Trinity. The Light had to first give birth to the Darkness, so that the eternal Wisdom could view itself therein, just like in a mirror, otherwise God could have only revealed Himself to Himself. The Light is the first Materia of all things, and all Corpora inclusive of the Body of Human Beings will only then be fully restored to their first dignity, when the Light will again shine out of them from within.

"Trismegistus, in the countenance of Creation, first saw a lovely and joyful but intermingled Light. Following that, a dreadful, sorrowful Darkness appeared and moved downward; it descended from the Light like a cloud from the Sun. This Darkness was certain thickened Water. After that, the Holy Word came forth out of the Light, moved upon the Water, and made all the things out of it."

-(*Thomas Vaughan, Aula Lucis*)

In Creation, the Darkness is separated from the Light, as Eve is from Adam. As the woman in the separation has retained much of the male Essence, that is why the Darkness in the separation has retained much of the Light-Essence, because they cannot be totally separated from each other. That is why the Darkness yearns for the Light as for its true life, because originally they were one and dwelled together in the greatest of harmony. Also the Light yearns for the Darkness, so that it may reveal and perceive itself therein.

When now, these two extreme principles are being brought in this manner into harmony with each other in a middle, third principle, so that the materia of these becomes transparent and illuminated, that then is such a Being, that can temper all ailments and disagreeableness, may they be human bodies or all the other bodies, which are created out of Light and Darkness.

It should be understood, that when we are speaking about these incomparable Beings, we are talking about the Lapis Philosophorum. Originally, the Darkness was not evil. It was good because the Light was in control of the Darkness, and it was therefore, only a gentle impetus and reason for the effect of the Light, so that God's works could be revealed through it. It seems, that the darkness became evil only in the lower creation, because those creatures who were created in a total equilibrium of Light and Darkness, aroused and multiplied the Principle of Darkness within themselves, and in this manner they let the Darkness gain dominion over their Light. Through this it began to suffer.

That is God's Lamb, or from the Beginning of the World, the crucified and strangulated Light!

-(Revelation 13-8)

"Divine Wisdom is a Light and this Light is the Life of all Creatures, and Life is a Tincture, and this cannot be encountered fixed or constant in any way, but the metallic Nature. That is why the Sages followed this Light out of the occult Wisdom step by step, and they found it, in an unsightly dark body, where nobody would have easily looked for it. They then liberated it with the upper Light, as its origin, tinges and multiplies, and then it can be used as a remedy to strengthen their natural Life."

-(Microcosmic Vorspiel = Excerpt from the Microcosmic Prelude)

Adam (the Human Being) was originally the Quintessence of the Whole of Creation, the small World (Microcosmos) the image of God and the large World. Before the fall, when Adam carried God's picture in an obvious manner, he was in Paradise. After the fall, the Light in him became darkened through the predominance of the earthly element. What once was Light became a shadow, that is, it is now a coarse dark body. If the Human Being wishes to again reach Paradise, then he must dissolve the dark shadow, and draw again the hidden or occult Light out of the Darkness. That is why the Alchemist said:

"Son, draw the ray out of his shadow!"

(Hermes, Cap.II)

If we, therefore, through the subtle divine Light will be born again from up above and will be tinged and illuminated in our Soul, we then can cleanse the lower Light from its curse which is hidden and darkened under the darkness and in this manner bring forth a new microcosmic birth. Originally, the Light was not darkened by the Materia, because in Paradise the Body of Adam was a pure, transfigured, transparent, crystalline body, like a living diamond. It was so pure that the Light which lives within him could radiate to the outside like a Sun.

Adam himself was the Light, the Son of the Sun, and the fluid diamond body which surrounded him was the with him united moist lunar Eve or Venus. However, through the ignition of the luciferous Fire, the luciferous Fire gained the upper hand in Adam, and then began the arousal of the worldly heat in him to dry out and coagulate the moist nature of Venus. So that the Earth came forth out of the crystalline water, through which the Light was wrapped in Darkness.

Adams immortal Light-Body was now concealed in this terra damnata, that is in the coarse earthly body. Yes, he himself became powerless and dark, because his noblest powers were swallowed up by the earthly Body. The "Tree of Life" became the Tree of Death.

At the same time, while the Body was materializing, a division of the sexes occurred. Originally, in Paradise the Human Being was androgynous (Man and Woman), Adam-Eve in one form. After the fall into the coarse Materia of the lower World, in accordance to the outer body, the Human Being was divided into two sexes.

In those Human Beings where the solar Light-Principle was predominant, the outer body took the shape of a male. On the other hand, in those Human Beings where the moist lunar Principle was predominant, the earthly body took the form of a female.

The later urge of the sexes towards each other is, in reality, a dark and misguided aspiration towards our own rebirth and renewal of our Being. It is, in reality, an aspiration towards the unification of Sol and Luna in a Human Being, that is, to reclaim the once blissful State of the immortal paradisiacal Hermaphrodite.

Basically, the Human Being wants to procreate itself anew, in order to live eternally like the Angels. Yet we produce only mortal descendants because the two Principles, Sol and Luna (Fire and Water), became separated in the Human Being through the fall. Adam (the Soul) no longer had access to the "Tree of Life" that is, to the Powers of Eternity of the crystalline, mercurial life-waters, the magnificent white tincture, out of which an imperishable Light-Body was once built, since he turned towards the deadly fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and became desirous of the mysteries of the lower, materialistic World.

-(Genesis: 3, 22-24)

At this point his eyes were opened, and he became cognizant that he was naked; in the coarse, earthly sense, he was without clothes. That is how he lost the immortal, full Light Body of Paradise, and received the grey mortal "Coat of Skins."

-(Genesis: 3-21)

Since in our Subjecto, the coarse Darkness by far surpasses the Weight of that in his Inner concealed Light, it is therefore, very important when it comes to the hermetic Work, to separate by means of the Azoth, the superfluity or excess of the Darkness of the Light artfully and subtile and to increase and improve the enclosed little lower Light through the greater upper Light, qualitative and quantitative, to exalt it again to its first dignity and perfection.

Originally, Adam was created out of the Quintessence of all the Elements, that is out of the *materia prima* of all things. The Sages call this the Mercurius Philosophorum, that is a dry water. In the beginning, through Divine Wisdom, the Great Whole World was created out of this *materia prima* (Chaos). This *materia* is with the Human Being one nature, but with this difference, that this Primordial Matter expands in all creatures, but in Human Being it concentrates. That is the true Self-Knowledge, the highest Study in hermetic Science.

Therefore, you must be mindful in the new microcosmic Creation, that is, in the *Magnum Opus* of the Sages, that all Elements of our *Subjecti*, as well as the lower and the upper (Light, Air, Water, Earth, Fire, fleeting and fixed *Spiritus*) be made into a philosophical Water, or respectively into Wine, in which Light and Darkness, Death and Life are together, as it was in the primordial Chaos of Creation.

When that is accomplished, this Water must be gently separated from the Earth, in the divine Fire, so that the subtile Earth which is hidden, philosophical Wine or mercurial Water comes forth. When all the Water (Spirit) has been separated from the Earth, and the Earth is covered with Darkness, then the heavenly Seed will be sown therein. This Seed will prove its blossoms through a multitude of colours, and will enter into a white and eventually into a red immortal fruit; this is the highest goal of all of Alchemy.

This Darkness is the desired and blessed philosophical Blackness which has concealed within itself a delicate Light. It is a virgin, a totally uninhibited Earth that has never before bore anything, but from her heart desires the Light. This new Earth, upon which the whole Heaven has his eyes, is the true Gold-Magnet who draws towards itself the Seed of Light of the heavenly Sun and the Moon, and within itself solidifies into a Corpus. This Earth is only a subtle shell of the Light, and a matrix wherein the upper heavenly Light clothes itself and becomes visible. But, in this Phase of Dissolution, is that in the Chaos by the Matrix conceived heavenly Light is not visible yet, instead it is still veiled by the black Darkness of Death. This condition of the philosophical Blackness is described by the Alchemist John Pordage (some consider him to be the English Jacob Boehme) with the following words:

"Because, through this, the delicate tincture, this delicate Child of Life must descend into the forms and attributes of Nature, so that it may suffer and endure the temptation, so that it may continue to exist; by necessity, it must descend into the divine Darkness, into the dark Saturnum, wherein no Light of Life can be seen. It must be held captive therein and be bound by the Chains of Darkness and it must live from the food, which the prickly Mercurium will give it to eat; and That is for the divine Life-Tincture nothing else but dust and ashes, poison and gall and fire and sulphur. It must enter into the fierce, angry Martem from which (as in the case of Jonah in the Belly of Hell) it is being devoured, and to feel the curse of the wrath of God; and also being tempted by Lucifer and Millions of Devils, who dwell in the Wrath-Fire Characteristic.

Through this, the divine Artista sees the first colour in this philosophical Work, wherein the tincture henceforth appears in its Blackness; it is the blackest Blackness. The learned Philosophers call this their black crow or their black raven, but also the blessed and blissful Blackness. In the Darkness of this Blackness, the Light of Lights is concealed in Saturni Characteristic or Quality, and in this Poison and Gall concealed in Mercury is the most exquisite Remedy against poison - the Life of Life. The blessed tincture is concealed in the wrath or fury and the curse Martis.

At this point, it seems to the Artist that all his work is for nought. What happened to the tincture? Nothing is being revealed, nothing which can be seen can be recognized or tasted, other than Darkness, the painful death, a hellish, frightful fire, nothing but wrath and the curse of God. It cannot be seen, that in this putrefaction or dissolution and destruction of the Tincture of Life, that in this Darkness there is Light, in this Death there is Life, in this Wrath and Fury there is Love and in this Poison there is the highest and the most exquisite tincture and remedy against all Poisons and Ailments.

The ancient Philosophi called this work or labour, their descent, their cineration, their pulverization, their death, their putrefaction of the materia of the stone, their corruption, and their caput mortuum. Do not despise this Blackness or black colour, but endure therein with patience and suffering and in silence until the Forty Days of Temptation have passed, until the days of Suffering are completed. Then the Seed of Life will arouse itself to Life, come to life again, sublimate or glorify, change itself into white, cleanse and sanctify itself, and give itself the redness, that is to transfigure itself and achieve permanence."

-(John Pordage to Jane Leade)

The german Alchemist Siebmacher writes:

"This Stone's Genus is everywhere. His Conception occurs in Hell. His Birth he has on Earth. His Life he leads in Heaven."

The alchemical work actually takes place in three Worlds; the lower, darker world, followed by the middle, paradisiacal world, and eventually in the upper, heavenly world. Each and every one of the three Main-Works of the Maganum Opus takes place in the appropriate sphere. The first work of the so-called preliminary work ends after the dissolution, through which the old world is being drowned by the flood; therefore, in reality in hell, that is, in the Darkness of the Underworld.

The christian Mystic Angelus Silesius had knowledge of this, when he said:

"Christ, for once you must be in the Abyss of Hell. If you do not go when you are alive, then you must enter when you are dead."

-(Cherubinischer Wandersmann)

Jacob Boehme said this:

"Forthwith after several severe Storms, my Spirit broke through the Gates of Hell into the Innermost of the Deity, and was there embraced by Love, like a Groom embraces his Bride."

-(Aurora)

With the attainment of the Ravenshead of the Alchemists, the first work of the Magnum Opus is concluded, because in the blessed Blackness is the beginning of the Birth of the paradisiacal Son of the Sun already present.

A Process for the Purification of Mercury

The purest mercury revivified from cinnabar is to be dissolved in as much aqua fortis as is necessary. Into the solution pour gradually as much solution of sea salt or hydrochloric acid as is necessary to precipitate the mercury, and the result is a white calx of mercury. Wash this well with water, and dry the calx. Mix the dried calx with one, two, or three parts of its weight of stone lime, and half a part of rye or wheat flour. Then distil the mixture by means of a retort. The distilled mercury, unless perfectly clean, may be passed two or three times through chamois leather. This revivified mercury is bright, like the firmament, and dissolves gold in a very short time, even by rubbing, and without heat. The whole process may, with advantage, be repeated two or three times.

Such mercury will be wonderfully pure. The aqua fortis solution must always be diluted with clean water before precipitating. Ordinary mercury contains crudities which it deposits in the water. Weigh the purified mercury, and it will be observed to have diminished by the quarter part or more of its weight, because whatever impurity there was in the mercury (though it be virgin running mercury) remains in the water, and cannot be precipitated.

But, to prove this truth, evaporate the water which was poured off from the precipitate, and there remains a sediment as black as ink. Purify, therefore, the mercury, and it is fit for all operations, and is a master over all metals.

The Fixation of Mercury with Gold

Before the Mercury is put in to be fixt with the gold, it must be proved whether it be prepared duly or not. For, if the mercurial water was rightly prepared, it will contribute mercury enough for the gold, and by this mercury the precipitated gold is so augmented that it is no longer common gold.

But if the mercurial water was not legitimately prepared, and consequently could not contribute much mercury to the gold, the gold remains poor, and, as soon as it is sensible of any heat, fulminates, and so is altogether unfit for fixation, being destitute of tinging mercury, which should have converted the whole body of gold into tincture.

Wherefore, after precipitation of the gold and mercury, a small portion of the precipitate must be heated in a small crucible, by way of trial. For, if it fulminates, it is a sign that the mercurial water was not perfect, and could not yield the gold mercury enough. But if, after it be red-hot, it comes forth with a delicate purple colour, it is to be supposed that the gold has imbibed mercury enough, and that they are both fixt together into a tincture.

The fixation is to be effected by placing the matter in a small glass phial in sand; the heat must be moderate and well sustained, and must be continued for the space of several weeks.

If well prepared, this mercury of metals should tinge a silver plate of a purple colour, when the plate is properly heated.

The Common Mercury made Tinging

Take of common mercury, one pound. Dissolve it in aqua fortis. Neutralise with ammonia, evaporate to dryness, and then heat more strongly. The mercury then sublimes in the neck of the retort.

Such a sublimate is readily dissolved by water. This mercurial water is endued with a power of extracting tinctures from metals, gems, and other stones.

In this work even Proserpine, the wife of Pluto, can scarcely elaborate anything more excellent. Therefore, when this mercury has drawn so much blood from the red lion as to change from white to red, then, indeed, it has acquired the amelioration of a higher degree, but as yet it is able to perform no miracles in tinging. That it may be exalted to so great perfection, the whole process must be repeated ten times, and fixation effected.

A Marvellous Fact about Mercury

Take salt of tartar and sulphur in equal parts, and sublimate both together. They will then ascend together into the glass. Take some of that sulphur and sublimated salt, ground small, and place

them in sublimatory on crude Mercury. Sublimate them together; then you will find the sulphur and the salt of tartar above in the glass sublimatory, while the Mercury remains at the bottom, and nobody can ever more revivify it. Take two parts of white sulphur, and also dissolve it. At length mix them together, and congealate.

Take also of these powders to 200 (or else 100) of Mercury made warm, and caused to melt. Then you will find Luna.

The Fourteenth Gradation

The fourth liquid in this place is the Water of Mercury, which is made for the fourteenth gradation as follows below:

Take one pound of Mercury sublimated twenty times with Sal Ammoniac, and one ounce respectively of the Flowers of Venus, Mars, Sulphur, and Antimony. Grind and mix all together, and then let them be resolved into a water.

This water requires no other labour whatever. Metals projected into it, digested for a short time, and afterwards fulminated, are graduated in a wonderful manner.

Water of Mercury—A Very Great Arcanum

Take of Mercury from salt of tartar, as often as it does not ascend, this takes place the seventh time ; likewise, take sublimated arsenic and sublimated sal ammoniac, Ib.j. of each. Let them be imbibed frequently with oil of the salt of alcali of tartar. Afterwards dissolve over marble into water.

Then take as much as there is of this water, and of sublimated sal ammoniac as before. Of Mercury and arsenic take Ib.j. Again dissolve into water. In this water dissolve ij. ounces of Luna and one quartal of alcali of soot and of best prepared salt. Mix them together, and coagulate them, by means of an exceedingly gentle fire, into a stone. Imbibe this with water of eggs.

Correct and fix very many times. Dissolve again, and coagulate. Imbibe again, and do this eight times or more, when you will have the miraculous stone of tincture. Also let it be imbibed to the red with the oil of the arcanum, so that it may become red ; for this is an arcanum not known to all, because it coagulates and fixes Mercury into genuine Luna.

Water of Mercury

Place iiij. parts of Mercury subl. and iiiij. parts of sal ammoniac in a luted glass vessel. Let it become a mass and dissolve this in oil. Take that water and close well ; also add j. part of filings of Luna. Dissolve the whole together in water. Then take that water and congeal. One part changes at least Ixvj. parts of Jupiter or crude Mercury, which will be the best Luna, standing every test.

Water of Mercury

Take equal parts of tartar and mercury, sublimate thrice, and pound on marble. Then dissolve. The metal is dissolved in that water in one hour, but the matter is to be distilled in water. Afterwards take of pure gold and pure Luna equal parts. Dissolve in the aforesaid water. Then take one part each of borax and camphor. Reverberate one-half of these, distil the water from

them and keep it. Next take one drop of this water and project it in the water wherein the body has been dissolved. Place it on a slow fire for seven days, and it will become milk. Replace this, and make in turn two or three drops. Repeat this process until it no longer grows white, but another red liquid remains. Coagulate this; then take one part of the white powder and project it over thirty parts of Venus, when it is rendered white, and answers every test. Finally, take the red powder, project it over the above-mentioned white, and the whole will become red.

Secret Note

Take filings of Venus and put them in wax for three days and nights. Take one pound thereof, four of vitriol, and five of sulphur. Mix; lute between two bricks in a carefully watched furnace, and note the result.

Aqua Ardens: or Water of Mercury

Take half a pound of sal ammoniac, a sufficient quantity of tartar and live sulphur, with one pound of common salt, and a quart of good white wine. Place all these in a well-luted vessel and submit to the fire, perhaps somewhat severely. Then keep the water well away from the wind. This purifies metals and converts mercury into pure Luna.

Water of Mercury

Take of fixed Mercury 3J. 5., with the same quantity of saltpetre. Pulverise them together. Then place them in a linen cloth in horsedung, with glass below. Above all this put a cloth as a covering, setting the horsedung on all sides above and below. Let it remain for two weeks, and then pound it until quite white. It will be sufficient for Luna.

Water of Sal Ammoniac

Take sal ammoniac, the same quantity of ... shell, and a little acetum. Pound these together. Dissolve them afterwards on marble and you will have water of sal ammoniac.

Fixation of Mercury

Take oil of tartar boiled in best lixivium, and distil through filter. Next boil till it attains to an oily consistency, and place in a good glass.

Take of the said Lixivium, one pocale. of Salmiax, five times sublimated, one pound. of Mercury, sublimated seven times, Ib.j. of very strong Water of the Fount, half a pocale.

Let them be mixed together in a Venetian vase. Allow them to stand for a day, so that the boiling may cease. Inject upon the oil Jijj- of Luna in horse dung for a month, and the whole will be converted into oil. This oil tinges all things into Luna, can be coagulated into a stone, and is the water of Mercury.

Sublimation of Mercury

Take aquafortis, in which dissolve as much Mercury as you please. Then add the same quantity of common salt. Abstract aquafortis through the alembic. Then increase the fire, so that the Mercury may be sublimed; an exceedingly fierce fire must then be employed, arrange in layers with that Mercury and plates of Jupiter on a humid place, when the Mercury will become water.

Water of Mercury Fixing all Spirits.

Take Mercury, j. marc.

Sal Ammoniac, ij. marc.

Rub the two together into a glass vessel over a slow fire, and it will become a hard mass. Pound this and it will become a powder, which dissolve in water. Then take j. marc, of pure Luna or Sol carefully made into plates.

Put this in the aforesaid water; and this water fixes all spirits.

Water of Mercury

Take crude Mercury j.lb. Put it in a cucurbit to distil. Give it a slow fire, and a single drop will come forth. Pour this back; distil again, and two drops will come forth. Pour these back again, and continue this process until the whole is converted into water. This water penetrates and dissolves bodies.

Note.

Mercury is called honey, calcined Luna, the assistance. Water of Mercury is called water. Thus, Plato.

Water of Mercury

Take of mercury sublimated and of antimony giiiij. each. Break each in pieces separately. Put together in a well-luted retort. Set in sand; apply a gentle fire. Refine over. Should it attach itself in the tube, ease it with a coal. Increase the fire until it no longer comes over. When it is cold put the matter upon a stone.

Pound it small. Should Mercury still remain, remove it. Then put again into a retort. Refine more effectually than previously, even until all the mercury has become water. Thus you may also make oil of antimony. Take the matter in a glass. Pound small, Pound the moisture. Do this continually and distil until red oil comes over.

Water of Mercury

Mercury thrice sublimated from tartar is thereby turned into water in a cucurbit in hot ashes.

Water of Mercury

Take of Mercury, of Sugar Candy, equal quantities,

Pound them together. Leave the whole to putrefy for ten days. Distil it through the alembic twice and you have sublimated arsenic.

Sublimated Arsenic

Take of Crude Arsenic,lb

Of Soap,lb

Pound the arsenic well. Mix these together, and so sublimate once or twice.

This arsenic dissolves well in aquafortis and is good to fix.

Item

Take equal parts of crude sulphur and mastich.

or

Take equal parts of sulphur and white sugar. Distil, and there will come a water or an oil. Take thrice distilled aqua vitae, and place in it two parts of saltpetre. Distil to a water. It dissolves all bodies and renders Mercury fixed in one hour.

Dissolving Water

Dissolve glass gall in an aquafortis. The same water dissolves all spirits, arsenic, sulphur, cinnabar, Mercury, etc.

Note.

Calcine Luna with orpiment. Sprinkle the same powder upon Mercury sublimate. Thus it becomes fine silver.

Note.

Take equal parts of orpiment and vitriol. Melt together so that a red powder is produced, of which project some on Luna in a state of flux, and you will find fine gold.

Extraction of the Quintessence from all Metals

Take acetum distilled from wine and sal ammoniac fixed in it. It extracts the quintessence from all metals and is a secret.

Water of Mercury

Take Mercury sublimate, pound it small; imbibe a few times, say, five or six, with oil of vitriol. Continue to pound it dry seven times. Put it in a thoroughly luted glass. Pour upon it six times the weight of oil of vitriol, together with the moisture. Place it in a distilling stove. . Distil it as an aquafortis, at first gently, then stronger, and strongest last of all. Then the third part of the sublimated Mercury distils away, and the other stands up beautiful and brilliant like a small oriental pearl in a distillatory; it is such beautiful sublimated Mercury as can never before have been seen. Then proceed continuously as long as you please. Next, gradually extract the Phlegm in the bath. Then you will have water of Mercury, which is above all waters. Ferment this with soul of the Sun. Coagulate and dissolve fix and coagulate and it will tinge if God has so willed it.

Beautiful Mercury brought over from Mercury

Take Luna and Mercury equal parts. Dissolve in aquafortis: then abstract the water so that it may remain as a thick pottage. Dissolve this pottage again for eight days, and it will be converted into water. Abstract as before and again resolve four times, when you will ultimately have water which persists through all tests, and makes out of Mercury a Luna which remains everywhere. A drop or -i.\ to 2 oz. of Mercury heated to evaporation.

Note the Sulphurous Work

Boil sulphur well in vinegar or urine. Wash it well. Afterwards dissolve it over the fire and project as much as possible over the fire. Place it in a luted instrument and burn gently in a slow

fire for 30 days, when you will have at the bottom a Mercury which is not very red. Dissolve in an open glass vessel into oil. This oil tinges in a marvellous manner.

Another Method

Take one-third part of crude tartar. Sift thoroughly, and add six parts of prepared common salt. Boil for a day, until it is converted into water. Set to cool, and distil by means of a filter, afterwards let it boil until hardened, and you will have the very best borax.

Mercury of Jupiter

Take of Mercury subl. Jij.

Mercury crude, 3J.

Jupiter §ij.

Pound together for five or six hours. The crude will then be converted into water, and Jupiter into Mercury. Preserve all these.

Sublimation of Mercury

Take aquafortis, in which dissolve as much Mercury as you please. Then add the same quantity of common salt. Abstract aquafortis through the alembic. Then increase the fire, so that the Mercury may be sublimed; an exceedingly fierce fire must then be employed, arrange in layers with that Mercury and plates of Jupiter on a humid place, when the Mercury will become water.

The Fourth Gradation

Let us now speak about gradations made with oils, which do not dissolve after the mode and form of strong waters, but in digestion, and thus accomplish their perfection. The first gradation of this kind is made with Oil of Antimony, in which is latent a wonderful tincture of redness. Let the following be the process adopted : —

Take of Antimony one pound and of sublimated Mercury half a pound. Let them both be distilled together over a powerful fire by means of an alembic, and the redness will ascend as thick as blood. This tinges and graduates all Luna into Sol, and brings the latter when pale to the highest degree of permanent colour.

The resuscitation or restoration of Mercury

The resuscitation or restoration of calcined Mercury is produced by distillation in retorts. For only Mercurius vivus ascends into the cold water, and the ashes of Saturn, Venus, or sulphur are left. But the resuscitation and restoration of sublimed Mercury is brought about in hot water. It is necessary, however, that it should first of all be very minutely pounded, so that the boiling water may resolve from it the spirit of salt and of vitriol, which it raises up with itself in the process of sublimation, and the Mercurius vivus runs together at the bottom of the water. If, now, such Mercurius vivus be sublimated anew with fresh salt and vitriol, and again be resuscitated in boiling water, and if this be repeated seven or nine times, it will be impossible to purify and renovate it more effectually. Preserve this as a great secret in Alchemy and Medicine, and rejoice over it exceedingly; for in this way all the impurity and blackness and poisonous nature are taken away from mercury.

The resuscitation, restoration, and renovation of Mercury cannot be accomplished without sublimation; for unless after calcination it be sublimated it will never be revivified. Sublimate it, therefore, and afterwards reduce it as you would any other sublimated substance.

THE PARACELSIC METHOD OF EXTRACTING MERCURY FROM ALL THE METALS

To extract Mercury from metallic bodies is nothing else but to resolve them, or to reduce them into their first matter: that is, running Mercury, such, in fact, as it was in the centre of the earth before the generation of the metals, namely, a damp and viscous vapour, containing invisibly within itself natural Mercury and sulphur, the principles of all metals. Such Mercury is of unspeakable power and possesses divine secrets.

The reduction spoken of is made by mercurial water, which was not known to John of Rupescissa, or to others, however they may boast. It must, therefore, be carefully studied and treated with unwearied assiduity.

Let the aforesaid mercurial water be thus prepared:

Take three pounds of Mercury sublimated seven times by Vitriol, Salt- Nitre, and Alum; one pound and a half of Sal ammoniac, clear and white, three times sublimated from salt. Grind these well together, alcoholise them, and sublimate in a sublimatory by means of sand for nine hours. When the mass has cooled, remove the sublimate with a feather, and sublimate with the rest as before. Repeat this operation four times, until it will no longer sublimate, and in the bottom there remains a black mass of fluid like wax. Having cooled this, take it out; grind it again, and imbibe it in a glass dish several times with the prepared water of Sal ammoniac. When it is spontaneously coagulated, imbibe it again and dry it, repeating this process nine or ten times, until it will scarcely coagulate any further. Grind it very small on marble in a damp place, and dissolve it into a beautiful oil, which you must rectify from all its dregs and residuum by distillation in ashes. Carefully preserve this water, for it is by far the chief of all waters.

Take eight ounces of it, and put in it plates of the purest gold or silver carefully cleansed, an ounce and a half in weight. Place this in a closed vessel for digestion over hot ashes during a period of eight hours. Then you will see your body at the bottom of the vessel transmuted into a subtle vapour or Mercury. Having made a solution of the whole mercurial water, separate it, by sublimation in an alembic over a slow fire, from its first matter, and keep it carefully in a glass vessel. You will thus have the true Mercury of the body, the use whereof in desperate cases, provided only it be carefully employed, is marvellous and celestial*; and on that account, therefore, not to be revealed to unworthy persons.

To Convert Metals into Mercury

Take Mercury sublimated seven times, and add to it the same quantity of the purest flour of wheat. Pound them together and saturate the matter with a little pure water. Place in a vessel and subject them to a slow fire, that the moisture may evaporate. This having been done put the matter into a circular furnace (retort) with the neck of the glass downward. Drive it by descent,

and the Mercury will descend. And that Mercury being heated devours all metals, until they are reduced to Mercury.

And Notice.

Make an amalgam with extracted Mercury (from lunar), by the addition of Mercury, sublimated and revivified. Let it stand by a slow fire over the cinders, and you will see Mercury ascending. Make it descend by turning the fixatory until it is fixed and remains with the extracted Mercury at the bottom. Then add sublimated and revivified Mercury. Fix it, and again add fresh Sublimated Mercury, and so multiply infinitely.

Also

Invariably place a little dissolved Luna between the extracted Mercury and revivified Mercury.

Mercury

Take Mercury seven times sublimated and revivified, as you know, and place in a warm stove-bath. Supply the same with leaves of Luna to devour. When they have thus been arranged in the stove-bath, you will perceive that the said Luna has been totally transformed into powder, which is the medicine over the Mercury 3. [? to the third grade.] Then having thus collected the said Mercury, you are to nourish it with common purged Mercury, so that it may digest well in its hot bath. Thus, also, common purged Mercury is converted into a powder which is Mercury over other Mercury 3. You may cause it to revert into a body, as you know. Also, you must know that the above mentioned Mercury, if placed in dung, will for a time be converted into oil. Congelate and waxen this with incombustible oil, and its virtue will be infinitely augmented.

Oil which tinges Luna into Sol

Take antimony 5. j., with Vo.\ of sublimated Mercury. From this proceeds a red oil which has the property of gilding.

Aquafortis Purging all Metals and Fixing Sublimated Spirits

Take vitriol, alum, sal ammoniac, and oil of tartar. If you put a metal over warm ashes it is soon melted. It fixes sublimated spirits and purges them from all superfluity.

Note.

Take equal parts of common salt rendered fluid like wax by a candle, and sulphur. Place in a strong glass phial or in a crucible, setting fire above and below it. Then it will be incorporated. One part of this suffices for 60 parts of Mercury.

Or,

If it be incorporated with sublimated Mercury, or several times with sublimated arsenic, and then be itself sublimated, it works wonders.

The Extraction of Mercury

Take aquafortis, to which join common water, lest it be too strong, and sal ammoniac. If you evaporate this water you have oil of antimony, with which you can test anything.

Note.

When you wish to Dissolve Mercury Sublimate and White Marcasite (perhaps Bismuth). Put the sal ammoniac into aquafortis, and they will dissolve; otherwise they will not. Aquafortis is made of vitriol, saltpetre, alum, cinnabar, and verdigris.

Note.

Take oil of tartar and oil 2d over amalgam of Luna and Mercury in equal quantities. Mercury will then be fixed as Hans Rormeyer has stated.

Chapter 1: First Common Sublimation.

Take some roman vitriol, common salt, and mercury in equal parts one pounds, incorporate everything and amalgamate with little vinegar, place in a suitable bowl to sublime with its hat, and container giving scalar fire until all the water is out and after increase the fire till is all sublimated, and then to get it purer and more crystalline it will be sublimed again with one pound of common salt, and vitriol four ounces, and the third time it will be sublimed only with salt, and the reader is warned that the salts has to be decrepitated and the vitriol dried.

Chapter 2 Second Sublimation

Take mercury one pound, vitriol four ounces, salt armoniac four ounces, rock salt four ounces, wet all with vinegar and mix together into a marble mortar, then place in a bowl with hat, and container, then distilled the vinegar the hat's pipe must be very well closed to prevent air from enter, then get the mercury to sublime increasing the fire, and you will have a clear like a crystal sublimed.

Chapter3. Third Sublimation

Get the mercury calcined or dissolved into strong water (made from one part of niter and two parts of vitriol) and then distill the water and take the precipitated get mixed with a lot of vitriol, dried, and common decrepitated salt in equal parts as must as the quicksilver did weigh, put in a bowl to sublime according to the art, and then mix again with salt a quarter of its weight, as said above, and it will sublime for the second time, and this is the best sublimed to be used in medicine.

Chapter 4: Fourth Sublimation with the Regulus of Antimony

Take of purged mercury and regulus of antimony in equal parts one pound, “rubificato” vitriol (1) eight ounces, decrepitated salt (2) one pound, get all smashed and place into a “saglio” (probably a flask for sublimation), putting on two or three pounds of strong water, and then sublime according to the art, then again take the sublimed, and the caput mortuum, and again, mix together, and sublime, and repeat the said operation for the third time, and this sublimed is very good to get the sweet mercury in place of the usual one.

Chapter 5: Fifth Philosophical Sublimed or Metallic Vinegar of Philosophers.

Take well purged mercury, that's to say extracted from cinnabar and dissolve into aqua fortis strong water made from saltpeter and vitriol in equal parts, and let precipitate by distilling, into a retort with container, separate the sublimed portion, and powder the precipitate, and join as much decrepitated salt (see end note 2) and vitriol “rubificato” (see end note 1) as mercury's weight, I mean if the mercury did weigh one pound of vitriol and one pound of salt then put all to sublime according to the art, gathering the aqua fortis-strong water, which will distill, and take the sublimed and powder it and add calcined tartar and quicklime in equal parts and place into a retort and distill fitting a half water container where the living mercury will be distilled inside, which again will be distilled in aqua fortis, or the mentioned mercury will be taken, decrepitated salt, vitriol “rubificato” in equal parts and for every pound of mercury four ounces of saltpeter, mix all together in a marble mortar, having first slightly diluted the mercury with the said aqua fortis, and put all the things united into a bowl with heat to sublime, and after having sublimed get back again with tartar, and sublime as above to rectify the mercury, which again will be sublimed as said above, and repeating that sublimation, and regeneration up to nine times, which has to be kept sublimed, which it will be then philosophical as with happiness it will be ready to be used in every operation, as this is the real philosophical sublimed as Quercetanus says in his Tetrad. From his words the adept can imagine how much in esteem he should have mercury, as from it he can really have whatever he wishes.

Quercetanus in his Tetrad says the following latin words: ” *Mercurius autem item tribus medis redditur philosophicus sublimatione, precipitatione, distillatione.....Mercury can be made Philosophicus with three operations, that's to say Sublimation, Precipitation, Distillation*”, and all these operations are found in this recipe and to better authenticate my own opinion on the matter I will quote what Quercetanus says further on essentialized mercury from the doctrine of Paracelsus tome 6 page 29: “*Essensificatus Mercurius ex Paracelsi doctrina sit reiteratis sublimationibus ex vitriolo et sale..... They are repeated sublimation from vitriol to resurrect it and take it to the highest perfection and strength. Certain sublimations carry the quicksilver to the supreme purity rising from black and removing impurities, by means of these sublimations it get soaked with sulfur and fire and all effective and admirable celestial properties that make it really philosophical, the real metallic vinegar of philosophers is output and transforms the Sun and the Moon in their first matter, nature of spirits with their vital radical bodies and seminal humors, that holds fiery and sulphureous nature (which philosophers have much hidden). I even add this essentialized and exalted mercury to get dissolved in philosophical vinegar, where the Sun is dissolved in due philosophical proportion. And then it will be separated from menstruum, after that with the art of sublimation separated from the wet, which is why the mercury will be*

adorned in the purple robe of the Sun (3), life of the Sun which transfers the power to accomplish the magisterium and perfectly clean any body. Even in mercury there is latently the nature of the Sun, which can accordingly be fixed, coagulated, frozen in crystalline hardness especially with the right weight of metallic and flowing waters, or roughly pushed to force the contrary so extinguished and mixed to the womb to have no slightest substance of these particle lost or diminished (it is not difficult here to distinguish all our first work operations, with the sublimations necessary to volatilize salts and coming out of the dark phase, the fixation by gold, the removing of excessive humidity).

Side note ‘Detractors of mercury did not know the philosophical arcane’.

The Circulatum majus, or Metallick Acetum acerimum of Paracelsus.

Lib. 10. Arch. pag. 38.

If common Mercury ought to be reduced into the first liquid Being, then is it first to be mortify'd, and depreived of its Form, and that is done by several sublimations with Vitriol and common Salt, that at last it may be made like fixed Cristal: Then dissolve it in its Matrix, namely, in the *primum Ens* of Salt, (*the Circulatum minus made of Salt, or the Water of Salt*)

*circulated described above in Numb. 27.) putrify a Month; add to it new Arcanum of Salt (*Circulatum minus*) that the impure may be precipitated to the bottom, but the pure turn'd into Cristals: sublime the same in a close Reverberatory, being sublimed, turn it up continually, till it comes to a redness; this sublimation extract with the Spirit of Wine rectifyed to the highest (*Philosophical Wine*) separate the Spirit of Wine (*by distillation*) the remainder (*the dry Tincture or Crocus of Mercury*) dissolve upon a Marble, (*per deliquum*) and digest for a Month, pour new Spirit of Wine to it, digest for a time, and distil; Then will the *Arcanum* of the *primum Ens*, or first being of Mercury rise over in a liquid substance, which is by the Philosophers called Metallick *Acetum acerimum*, and in our Archidoxyes *Circulaum majus*: And the same is to be understood of Antimony, Gemms, and all other Metals.*

Of reducing common Mercury into the first Matter or Middle Substance

Now my Son! we will give you full instruction and demonstration of decocting and reducing common *Argent vive* into its first Matter, or middle substance, and as in the foregoing Chapters we declared the way of reincrudating the two Luminaries, so now we will demonstrate the ways and means of decocting the said Mercury. First, we will teach the way of distinguishing good Mercury from bad, sophisticated and corrupted, which way is, to take common Mercury, brought out of *Spain* in Skins sealed, or if you cannot have this, take any other, and put a little of it in a Silver Spoon heated so, as to make the Mercury evaporate, and if the remainder of it be of a white or citrine Colour, ‘tis good; but if of another Colour, bad, and not at all fit for our Work, because sophisticated: Then take of *Roman Vitriol* two Pounds, melt it in a glazed Vessel, being melted, add one pound of Mercury, and as much of common Salt prepared, stir and shake till they be all mix'd, evaporating the moisture with such a heat as that of the Sun, then take out the Matter, grind, and put it in a Sublimatory, and sublime the Mercury by the usual degrees of Fire: The Vessels being cold, take out the sublimation, to which being put into a Retort, pour of the Vegetable Water without Phlegm, (*Philosophical Aqua Vitoe rectify'd*) about three or four

Fingers, let it boyl in Balneo two Hours, then distil in Ashes, that the Vegetable Water may ascend; then cover the Retort with Ashes, and increasing the Fire, the *Mercury vive* will ascend, into the *Aqua ardens*, decant the Water from the Mercury, which again sublime with new Matters, and that six times, always casting away the Fæces: But take notice that these seven sublimations must always be transacted in Aludels, because you will no other way separate the adustible powder ascending in the Aludels:

And to instruct you, that you may not err, I will most distinctly repeat the method of the said seven Sublimations:

The way is this, to take a Glass Vessel like one of the narrower sort of Cucurbitis, with its Blind Head, perforated in the upper part of it, into this put two parts of Vitriol very well pulverized, of Mercury one part, and of Salt prepared one part, mixing all well the Matter being now gently dried, put on a blind Head, or rather an Aludel, yet observing not to cover the Cucurbit with Ashes above one third, the moistrure being evaporated by an easie heat, stop the Hole of the Aludel with a little Cotton, and increasing, sublime, all being cold, take out that which is sublimed, as well out of the Aludel, as the Cucurbit, in which (*if not yet cold*) dissolve the Fæces with hot Water, and so you will easily cleanse the said Vessel for its use. Now mix new Matters with your sublimation, and sublime as before, and this repeat seven times; then grind the sublimation into a most fine Powder, put it in the aforesaid Cucurbit with its blind Head, or Aludel, and also with its common Alembick, because of the operation differing from the former; the sublimation being put into a Cucurbit, pour to it of the simple Animal or Vegetable *Menstruum* (*the Animal Menstruum described in Numb. 37. or Vegetable in Numb. 29. but here above he order'd him to take Vegetable Water rectify'd, that is, Aqua ardens*) so much, as to be three Fingers above it, cover it with a blind Head, and digest in Ashes twelve Hours, then taking off the blind Head, put on a common Alembick, and draw off the *Menstruum* in Balneo, lay aside the Alembick again, and put on an Aludel, set the Vessel in Ashes so deep, as to cover the Matter in the Glass, give Fire by degrees, till all the moisture is exhaled, the Hole in the upper part of the Aludel stop with Cotton, increase the Fire, that the Mercury may be sublimed: Sublimation being ended, and the Vessels cold, take away the Aludel, and what you find sublimed in it, is not for our purpose; for it is that adult part, which is no Ingredient to our Magistery: Then gather the sublimation from the sides of the Cucurbit, which will be clear as Cristal, and have a care that it be not mix'd with its Fæces, grind, sift, and put it into the same Vessel, being cleansed from the Fæces, and pour the *Menstruum* drawn off in Balneo to it, cover the Vessel with an Aludel, digest twelve Hours as before, lay aside the Aludel, put on a common Alembick, distil in Balneo, lay aside this Alembick, put on an Aludel, and sublime in Ashes, the Fæces, as also the adustive part being cast out of the Aludel, gather the middle substance out of the Cucurbit dexterously; with this method you must sublime seven times, or till it leaves no Fæces in the Cucurbit: Having obtained this sign, take the said substance, grind, and put it in a Glass Vessel, pour to it the simple either Animal or Vegetable *Menstruum*, the height of three Fingers, cover the Vessel with a blind Head, digest gently two Days in Ashes, then decant the dissolutin into another Vessel, and that which remains in the Vessel, dry with a temperate heat, like that of the Sun, to which pour new *Menstruum*, covering the Vessel with a blind Head as before, and repeat the same method, till all the dissolvable part is dissolved, and in the bottom of the Glass will remain an indissolvible Earth, to be cast away, as no thing worth: Now take all the dissolution, that is, your decantations, and distil in Balneo, and the *Menstruum* being distilled, put on an Aludel, and in

Ashes sublime the Cristalline substance, which may truly be called the first Matter of Mercury; this is that middle substance, with which we incalcinate our *Menstruum*, (*Circulatum majus, described in Numb. 50*) and make infinite particulars, as we have taught you before: This also is called the Mineral Stone. Now, my Son! will you be able to proceed by infinite ways, yet following these which I have shewed you; and remember, that Mercury thus reduced, is that, which our Captain *Raymond* speaks of, making mention of the Mineral Stone, as also in the *last Chapter of his Book, nam'd Vade mecum*, and in many other places of his Volumes. This is that Mercury which *Arnold de Villa nova*; treats of in his *Rosarium*, and we declare to you, except Mercury be reduced into the first Matter with the said Vegetable or Animal Water, it is altogether impossible to do any good with it, by reason of its great Corruption, occasioned by the crudity of it.

The Etherial and Terrestrial Waters of Metals of *Lully* for the making of Precious Stones

Take the Water of Mercury, made by the way, which we declared in our (*Novissimum Testamentum*), and in *Libro Mercuriorum* (*the Mercurial Menstruum, or Glorious Water of common Argent vive, described before in Numb. 44.*) and in that Water, Son! you must dissolve one half Ounce of the purest *Luna*, after the filtered dissolution, separate the Water from the Fæces (*distil the Menstruum from the Silver through an Alembick*) in which the limosity of the Silver will ascend.

This Water, Son! Resolves all other Bodies, and *Argent vive* itself, by Virtue of which, Son! Pearls are reformed by the way which I told you in our *Testamentum*, and in the *Compendium super Testamentum & Codicillum missum Regi Roberto*.

The second Water is thus made: Take half an Ounce of Lead, and of the aforesaid Water as much as sufficeth, when you see the Lead dissolved, separate the Water by filtered distillation (*filter the dissolution of the Lead*) and throw out the Fæces, as nothing worth, then distil the Water by Balneo (*draw off the Menstruum in Balneo*) and keep the Fæces (*the dissolved Lead*) for occasion.

The third Water is thus made: Take of Copper one Ounce, and dissolve it in as much of the first Water as you please, and let it rest in its Vessel, in a cold place, for a Natural Day, then

separate the Green Water through a Filtre, and pour out the first Fæces, (*that which remains in the Filtre must be cast away*) then distil the Water through an Alembick, and keep the second Fæces.

The fourth Water is thus made: Take one Ounce of the purest Tin of *Cornwall*, which is purer than any other, and dissolve it in a quantity of the first Water, and distil (*through a Filtre*) that Water (*dissolution*) with its limosity, and the Fæces which remain cast away, then distil the Water through an Alembick, and keep (*the residue, or Tin dissolved*) the second Fæces.

The fifth Water is thus made: Take of the purest Iron one Ounce, and dissolve it in a sufficient quantity of the first Water, then distil through a Filtre, and cast away the Fæces, distil the Water through an Alembick, and keep the second Fæces.

The sixth Water is thus made: Take of the purest Gold one Ounce, and dissolve it as I told you in my *Testamentum*, that is, with pure *Lunaria* (*the simple Vegetable Menstruum without Argent vive and Silver*) mix'd with such a weight of the fifth Water (*now prepared from Iron*) and do, as you did with the other.

You may also, Son! Dissolve all those Metals in this order: Having made the first Water, in it dissolve the Metal, which we commanded you to dissolve after the second way, (*to wit Lead*) then do with it as we told you before. In this second Water dissolve the third Metal, (*Copper*) and in the Water of the third Metal dissolve the fourth Metal, (*Tin*) and in the Water of the fourth Metal dissolve the fifth Metal (*Iron*) and in the Water of the fifth Metal dissolve the sixth Metal (*Gold*). Take which of those Waters you like best to dissolve a Metal. Son! these limosities of Metals are called Quintessences, or Mineral Mercury, which the Philosophers esteemed in the Alchymical work (*in Alchymical Tinctures*) and the lapidisick, (*in the making of Pretious Stones*) and in the Medicinal Work, (*in the preparing of Medicines*) But Son! in the Alchymical Work those Quintessences ought to be more subtil, and to be done by dividing the Elements as we (*in the third Book of this Volume*) shall declare, but in (*making Pretious*) Stones, the Quintessence (*aforesaid*) are not so, in such a subtil Matter, but in Medicine either of them (*this two-fold way of preparing*) may be used.

Having spoken of the Quintessences of Minerals (*of Metallick Waters*) how we are to make them, it is now convenient to speak of the division of them in general. And my Son! do thus; When your Metals are dissolved, you must divide every Water (*being first filtered, and distilled from its remainder*) and every divided Water (*now distilled*) into two parts, and one part of every part you must put with its own Fæces (*the remaining Metal, which the Water had left in distillation*) into a Glass Alembick, and distil a *Limus deserti*, which is Air made out of two Bodies, (*or Metals*) in the Furnace, which we design'd you first with a gentle Fire, shining with great Mineral Lustre, and with great limosity appropriated to receive Celestial Virtues: And put every one of those Waters into a Glass Vessel, with a long Neck and round, and then stop the Mouth of it with common Wax, and after that with Mastick, and every of those Vessels put in the open Air so, as that neither Stone, nor any other hurtful thing may tough the Glass. Son! Take the material Fæces, from which you resolved the *Limus*, which are the second Fæces left in the distillation of the Waters which you put in the Air. (*Take the Caput mortuum from the distillation of every Limus desertus, or the third Fæces, for the first remaining in the Filtre were cast away, from the second the Limus desertus was distilled; now the Fæces of the Limus desertus, are those which he here calls the second*) and put them in a Glass Vessel with a long Neck, which may contain two hands breadth, and put in part of its own Water, which was reserved from that aforesaid limous substance, and stop the Vessels with a Stopple of Wax, and with Leather and Mastick, as you did to the other, and Bury them (*Waters of Metals*) in a Garden, in an Earth half a Yard deep, and put also something about the Neck of the Vessels, which may appear above ground, for the preservation of them, and

let them be there for one whole Year: Son! the Waters which are put into the Earth are of one Nature, and those which are put in the Air of another; for Son! those which are put into the Earth have a hardning, coagulating, and fixing Virtue and Quality; and those which are in the Air, have the Virtue and Property of being hardened, coagulated and fixed: the Year being ended, you will have all that is desired in the World for this Work, etc.

The *Aqua Regis* of Lully.

In Exp. 17.

Take Mercury being twice sublimed with Vitriol, and common Salt prepared, each time with new materials, grind, and if there be one Pound of sublimate, take the whites of nine new laid Eggs, which whites beat so long, that it seems to be Water; then mix the white with that sublimate, and put it in a Retort with a long Neck, joyn a Receiver to it very close, giving it a Fire of Ashes at the beginning most gentle, till it distils by that degree: That distillation

ceasing, increase the Fire, and at last give a most violent Fire, and by this means part of the Mercury will turn into Water, and part into running Mercury, which running Mercury bein gone over sublime again, then grind and joyn it with the distilled Water, and distil again as before, repeating the Magistery, till all the sublimate is gone over, and converted into Water: Wherefore you may the same way multiply it as often as you please, always putting new sublimate to the Water, and distilling till it be converted into Water. Now take this Water, put it in a small Urinal (*Cucurbit*) joyning a Head to it with a Receiver, then distil by Balneo, till the white seems to be gone over mixt with it, which you will thus know; take an Iron or Copper Plate, upon which let one drop of the distillation fall, if it boyls and seems to dissolve, take away the Receiver, joyning another very well luted, and distil by Ashes, and again by Ashes repeat this Magistery seven times: And thus you will have a Mercurial Water, which will serve you in many operations: Take now one Ounce of the Salt of the second Experiment (*Volatile Salt of Tartar, declared in Numb. 17.*) and four Ounces of this Water (*the acid Water now dissolved from Mercury sublimate*) mix them together, and the mixture will presently be dissolved; being dissolved, distil by Ashes with a gentle Fire luting the Joyns well, in the last place increase the Fire, that all the Salt may with the Water pass through the Alembick, then again put one other Ounce of the Salt into the same Water, and by distillation pass it all over as before, and thus repeat this Work of distillation four times, in every distillation adding an Ounce of the said Salt to that Water: Then will you have at length a Mineral Water vegetated and acuated, with the augmentation of Virtue and Power proceeding from the said most precious Vegetable Salt, without which is nothing done.

The Water of the fourth Gradation of *Paracelsus*.

Libro de Gradationibus, pag. 131.

Take of *Antimony* one pound, of *Mercury Sublimate*, half pound, distil both together with a violent Fire through an Alembick, and a redness will ascend like Blood, thick, which tingeth and graduates any *Luna* into *Sol*, and brings this pale Colour to the highest degree, of a permanent Colour. *Though Paracelsus thought it not always necessary to admonish his Disciples of the Spirit of Philosophical Wine as an addition in his Compositions, yet nevertheless ought I to declare to you the necessary addition of this Spirit in this Menstruum, that you may not err; for without it, it would be of no consequence, but rather a dammage to you in the more secret Chymy: The Adepts made sometimes Menstruums of this Kind, not with the Spirit of Philosophical Wine, but the Matter of it, namely, some Vegetable Oleosum, Thus;*

The Mercurial Vinegar of *Trismosinus*.

Libro Moratosan sive Octo Tincturarum in Secunda Tinctura.

Pag. 79. Aur. Vell. Germ.

Take *Argent Vive* purged the common way, put it in an Aembick, whereto pour very sharp Vinegar (*Vinegar mix'd with the Spirit of Philosophical Wine described before in Numb. 72.*) three Ounces of Vinegar to one Ounce of Mercury; draw off six times in *Balneo*, then force it to ascend into the Receiver, being distilled, rectifie it, and it will be prepared. *Sometimes instead of Philosophical Vinegar he used the strongest Aqua Fortis described in Numb. 73.*

116. The Mercurial Water of *Trismosinus*.

Libro. Octo Tincturar. in Tinct quarta. Pag. 80. Aurei Vell. Germ.

Take of *Roman Vitriol*, *Sal Niter*, of each one Pound and a half, of (*Vegetable*) *Sal armoniack* four Ounces, of Tiles pulverized one Pound, out of which distil *Aqua fortis* by the Rule of Art. Take of Venetian Mercury sublimed (you must have a care of its Venemous Fume) four Ounces, put it in a Cucurbit, pour the said *Aqua fortis* to it, draw off strongly, that the Mercury may be well mixed with the *Aqua fortis*, and it will be prepared. Albertus Magnus *prepared the same* Mercurial Water *thus*,

117. The Mercurial Water of *Albertus Magnus*.

Libro Compositum de Compositis.

Cap. 5. Pag. 937. Vol. 4. Th. Chym.

Take of *Roman Vitriol* two Pounds, of *Sal Niter* two Pounds, of *Alume* calcined one Pound; being well ground and mix'd together put the Matter in a fit Glass Phial, and having luted the

Joyns very close, that the spirits may evaporate, distill *Aqua fortis* after the common way, first with a weak Fire, secondly a stronger, thirdly with Wood, that all the Spirits may go over, and the Alembick turn white; then put out the Fire, let the Fornace cool, and keep the Water carefully, because it is the Dissolvitive of *Luna*, keep it therefore for the finishing of the Work, because that Water dissolves *Luna*, separates Gold from Silver, calcines *Mercury* and the *Crocus of Mars*, etc. This is the first Philosophical Water (*Common Aqua fortis*) and hath one Degree of Perfection in it. Take of the first Water one pound, dissolve in it two Ounces of (*Vegetable*) *Sal armoniack* pure and clear, which being dissolved, the Water is presently otherwise qualified, and otherwise coloured, because the first was of a Green Colour, and the Dissolvitive of *Luna*, and not of *Sol*, and presently after the putting in of the *Sal armoniack* the Colour of it is turned to a Citrine, and dissolveth Gold, Mercury, and Sulphur sublimed, and tingeth a Mans Skin of a most Citrine Colour, keep that Water (*Philosophical Aqua Regis*) apart. Take of the second Water one Pound, and of *Mercury* sublimed with *Roman Vitriol*, and common Salt five Ounces and a half, put it to the second Water by little and little gradually, seal the Mouth of the Glass well, that the Virtue of the *Mercury* put in may not suddenly exhale; put the Glass in Ashes temperately hot, and the Water will presently begin to work upon the *Mercury*, dissolving it and incorporating; and let the Glass stand thus in hot Ashes, and in the dissolution of the Water, till the Water appears no more, but has wholly dissolved the Sublimed Mercury: Now the Water acts always upon Mercury by the way of imbibition, till it dissolves it totally: But take notice, if the Water cannot wholly dissolve the Mercury put in, they lay aside the Mercury that is dissolved by that Water, and that which is not dissolved at the bottom dry with a gentle Fire, grind, and dissolve it with new Water as before, and thus repeat this Order, till all the Sublimed Mercury is dissolved into Water: And then joyn all the solutions of that third Water, into one, in a clean Glass, and stop the Mouth of it well with Wax, and keep it carefully: This is the third Philosophical thick qualified Water in the third degree of Perfection, and is the Mother of *Aqua Vitæ*, which dissolves all Bodies into their first Matter. Take the third clarifi'd Mercurial Water, qualifi'd in the third Degree of Perfection, putrefie it in the Belly of a Horse, to be well digested in a clear Glass with a long Neck, well sealed the space of 14 days, make it putrefie, and the Feces settle at the bottom, then will this Water be transmuted from a Citrine to a Yellow Colour, which done, take out the Glass, put it in Ashes with a most gentle heat, put on an Alembick with its Receiver, and begin to distil by little and little a most clear, clean, ponderous *Aqua Vitæ*, *Virgins Milk*, *most sharp Vinegar*, drop by drop, continuing constantly a slow Fire, till you have distilled all the *Aqua Vitæ* gently, then put out the Fire, let the Fornace cool, and keep it diligently apart. Behold this is *Aqua Vitæ*, the *Philosophers Vinegar*, *Virgins Milk*, by which Bodies are resolved into their first Matter, which is called by infinite Names. The Signs of this Water are these, if a Drop be cast upon a Copper Plate red hot, it will presently prentrate, and leave a White Impression, it smoaks upon Fire, is coagulated in the Air after the manner of Ice: and when this Water is distilled, the Drops of it do not enter continually as other Drops, but one is distilled one way, another another way; this Water acts not upon Metallick Bodies, as another strong Corrosive Water, which dissolves Bodies into Water, but if Bodies be put into this Water, it reduceth and resolves them all into Mercury, as you shall hear hereafter. Paracelsus made this Water by the following Method.

118. The Mercurial Water of Paracelsus.

In Appendix Manualis de Lap. Phil. Pag. 139.

Take of *Mercury* seven times sublimed with *Vitriol*, *Sal Niter*, and *Alume*, three pounds of (*Vegetable*) *Sal armoniack* sublimed three times with Salt, clear and white, one Pound and a

half, being ground together and alcolized, sublime them in a Sublimatory nine hours in Sand: Being cold, draw off the Sublimate with a Feather, and with the rest sublime, as before: This Operation repeat four times, till no more sublimes, and a Black Mass remains in the bottom flowing like Wax; being cold take it out, and being ground again, imbibe it often in the Water of *Sal armoniack* prepared according to Art (*the Menstruum described in Numb. 91.*) in a Glass Dish, and being coagulated of it self, imbibe it again, and dry nine or ten times over, till it will scarce any more be coagulated: Being ground finely upon a Marble, dissolve it in a moist place to a clear Oil, which you must rectifie by Distillation in Ashes from all Feces and Sediment. This Water keep diligently as the best of all. Lully *made his Mercurial Water of Mercury and the Stinking Menstruum thus,*

119. The Stinking Mercurial Menstruum of *Lully*.

Pag. 63. Testam. Novissimi..

Take of the Stinking *Menstruum*s four Pounds, and put in one pound of *Mercury Vive*, put the Matter *in Balneo* or Horse Dung six days, and it will be all converted into Water, distil by *Balneo*, and you will have a *Mercurial Water*, truly Mineral. Ripley *followed his Master in the way of making the Mercurial Water as followeth.*

120. The Mercurial Green Lion of *Ripley*.

Pag. 310. Pupillæ Alchymicæ.

Take *Mercury* sublimed with *Vitriol* and common Salt, to the quantity of 20 or 40 Pounds (*in my opinion two or four ought to be read*) that you may have enough. Grind it well into Powder, and put it in a Glass Vessel very large and strong, pour to it so many Pounds of the most strong Water (*the Stinking Menstruum is the strongest Water in the World, Pag. 138. Medullæ*) as there are Pounds of *Mercury*. Shake them soundly together, and the Vessel will become so hot, that you can scarce touch it; stop it well, and let it stand nine days in a cold place, shaking it strongly three or four times each day: Which done, put the Vessel in a Fornace of Ashes, and with a most gentle heat distil away all the *Aqua Vitæ (Menstruum)* which keep safe by it self, then immediately add another Receiver well luted, kindle a most strong Fire, and continue it till all the Golden Liquor is wholly distilled. *The same ways as the Mercurial Waters are made, may also be made Menstruum of this Kind out of the other Metals, thus.*

THE THIRD PART OF THIS TREATISE, CONTAINING THE DICTA OF THE SAGES

i. I will now proceed to quote the very words of the various Sages in regard to this point, in order that you may the more easily understand our meaning. Know then that Almighty God first delivered this Art to our Father, Adam, in Paradise. For as soon as He had created him, and set him in the Garden of Eden, He imparted it to him in the following words: "Adam, here are two things: that which is above is volatile, that which is below is fixed. These two things contain the whole mystery. Observe it well, and make not the virtue that slumbers therein known to thy children; for these two things shall serve thee, together with all other created things under heaven, and I will lay at thy feet all the excellence and power of this world, seeing that thou thyself art a small world."

ii. ABEL, the son of Adam, wrote thus in his Principles: After God had created our Father, Adam, and set him in Paradise, He subjected to his rule all animals, plants, minerals, and metals. For man is the mountain of mountains, the Stone of all stones, the tree of trees, the root of roots, and the earth of earths. All these things he includes within himself, and God has given to him to be the preserver of all things.

iii. SETH, the son of Adam, describes it thus: Know, my children, that in proportion as the acid is subjected to coction, by means of our Art, and is reduced into ashes, the more of the substance is extracted, and becomes a white body. If you cook this well, and free it from all blackness, it is changed into a stone, which is called a white stone until it is crushed. Dissolve it in water of the mouth, which has been well tempered, and its whiteness will soon change to redness. The whole process is performed by means of this sharp acid and the power of God.

iv. ISINDRUS: Our great and precious Matter is air, for air ameliorates the Matter, whether the air be gross or tenuous, warm or moist. For the grossness of the air arises from the setting, the approach, and the rising of the Sun. Thus the air may be hot or cold, or dry and rarefied, and the degrees of this distinguish summer and winter.

v. ANAXAGORAS says: God and His goodness are the first principle of all things. Therefore, the mildness of God reigns even beneath the earth, being the substance of all things, and thus also the substance beneath the earth. For the mildness of God mirrors itself in creating, and His integrity in the solidity that is beneath the earth. Now we cannot see His goodness, except in bodily form.

vi. SENIOR, or PANDOLPHUS, says: I make known to posterity that the thinness, or softness, of air is in water, and is not severed from the other elements. If the earth had not its vital juice, no moisture would remain in it.

vii. ARISTEUS delivers himself thus briefly: Know that the earth is round, and not flat. For if it were perfectly flat, the Sun would shine everywhere at the same moment.

viii. PYTHAGORAS: That which is touched and not seen, also that which is known but not looked upon, these are only heaven and earth; again, that which is not known is in the world and is perceived by sight, hearing, smell, taste, or touch. Sight shews the difference between black and white; hearing, between good and evil; taste, between sweet and bitter; touch, between subtle and gross; smell, between fragrant and fetid.

ix. ARISTEUS, in his Second Table, says: Beat the body which I have made known to you into thin plates; pour thereon our salt water, *i.e.*, water of life, and heat it with a gentle fire until its blackness disappears, and it becomes first white, and then red.

x. PARMENIDES: The Sages have written about many waters, stones, and metals, for the purpose of deceiving you. You that desire a knowledge of our Art, relinquish Sun, Moon, Saturn, and Venus, for our ore, and our earth, and why so? Everything is of the nature of nothing.

xi. LUCAS: Take the living water of the Moon, and coagulate it, according to our custom. By those last words I mean that it is already coagulated. Take the living water of the Moon, and put it on our earth, till it becomes white: here, then, is our magnesia, and the natures of natures rejoice.

xii. ETHEL: Subject our Stone to coction till it becomes as bright as white marble. Then it is made a great and effectual Stone, sulphur having been added to sulphur, and preserving its property.

xiii. PYTHAGORAS: We exhibit unto you the regimen concerning these things. The substance must drink its water, like the fire of the Moon, which you have prepared. It must continue drinking its own water and moisture, till it turns white.

xiv. PHILETUS: Know, ye sons of philosophy, that the substance, the search after which reduces so many to beggary, is not more than one thing of most effectual properties. It is looked down upon by the ignorant, but held in great esteem by the Sages. Oh, how great is the folly, and how great also is the presumptuous ignorance of the vulgar herd! If you knew the virtue of this substance, kings, princes, and nobles would envy you. We Sages call it the sharpest acid, and without this acid nothing can be obtained, neither blackness, whiteness, nor the Tincture.

xv. METHUSALEM: With air, vapour, and spirit we shall have vulgar mercury changed into as good silver as the nature of minerals will allow in the absence of heat.

xvi. SIXION: Ye sons of philosophy, if you would make our substance red, you must first make it white. Its three natures are summed up in whiteness and redness. Take, therefore, our Saturn, subject it to coction in aqua vitae until it turns white, becomes thick, and is coagulated, and then again till it becomes red. Then it is *red lead*, and without this lead of the Sages nothing can be affected.

xvii. MUNDINUS: Learn, O imitators of this Art, that the philosophers have written variously of many gums in their books, but the substance they refer to is nothing but fixed and living water, out of which alone our noble Stone can be prepared. Many seek what they call the essential "gum," and cannot find it. I reveal unto you the knowledge of this gum and the mystery which abides therein. Know that our gum is better than Sun and Moon. Therefore it is highly esteemed by the Sages, though it is very cheap; and they say: Take care that you do not waste any of our "gum." But in their books they do not call it by its common name, and that is the reason why it is hidden from the many, according to the command which God gave to Adam.

xviii. DARDANIUS: Know, my sons, that the Sages take a living and indestructible water. Do not, then, set your hands to this task until you know the power and efficacy of this water. For nothing can be done in our Art without this indestructible water. For the Sages have described its power and efficacy as being that of spiritual blood. Transmute this water into body and spirit, and then, by the grace of God, you will have the spirit firmly fixed in the body.

xix. PYTHAGORAS, in his Second Book, delivers himself as follows: The Sages have used different names for the substance, and have told us to make the indestructible water white and red. They have also apparently indicated various methods, but they really agree with each other in regard to all essentials, and it is only their mystic language that causes a semblance of disagreement. Our Stone is a stone, and not a stone. It has neither the appearance nor the properties of stone, and yet it is a stone. Many have called it after the place where it is found; others after its colour.

xx. NEOPHIDES: I bid you take that mystic substance, white magnesia. And have a care that the Stone be pure and bright. Then place it in its aqueous, vessel, and subject it to gentle heat, until it first becomes black, then again white, and then red. The whole process should be accomplished in forty days. When you have done this, God shows you the first substance of the Stone, which is an eagle-stone, and known to all men.

xxi. THEOPHILUS: Take white Magnesia, *i.e.*, quicksilver, mingled with the Moon. Pound it till it becomes thin water; subject it to coction for forty days; then the flower of the Sun will open with great splendour. Close well the mouth of the phial, and subject it to coction during forty days, when you will obtain beautiful water, which you must treat in the same way for another forty days, until it is thoroughly purged of its blackness, and becomes white and fragrant.

xxii. BÆLUS says: I bid you take Mercury, which is the Magnesia of the Moon, and subject it and its body to coction till it becomes soft, thin, and like flowing water. Heat it again till all its moisture is coagulated and it becomes a Stone.

xxiii. BASAN says: Put the yellow Matter into the bath, together with its spouse, and let not the bath be too hot, lest both be deprived of consciousness. Let a gentle temperature be kept up till the husband and the wife become one; sprinkle it with its sweat, and set it in a quiet place. Take care you do not drive off its virtue by too great heat. Honour then the King and his Queen, and do not burn them. If you subject them to gentle heat, they will become, first black, then white, and then red. If you understand this, blessed are ye. But if you do not, blame not Philosophy, but your own gross ignorance.

xxiv. ARISTOTLE: Know, my disciples, the Sages call our Stone sometimes earth, and sometimes water. Be directed in the regulation of your fire by the guidance of Nature. In the liquid there is first water, then a stone, then the earth of philosophers in which they sow their grain, which springs up, and bears fruit after its kind.

xxv. AGODIAS: Subject our earth to coction, till it becomes the first substance. Pound it to an impalpable dust, and again enclose it in its vessel. Sprinkle it with its own moisture till an union

is affected. Then look at it carefully, and if the water presents the appearance of , continue to pound and heat. For, if you cannot reduce it to water, the water cannot be found. In order to reduce it to water, you must stir up the body with fire. The water I speak of is not rain water, but indestructible water which cannot exist without its body, which, in its turn, cannot exist, or operate, without its own indestructible water.

xxvi. SIRETUS: What is required in our Art is our water and our earth, which must become black, white, and red, with many intermediate colours which shew themselves successively. Everything is generated through our living and indestructible water. True Sages use nothing but this living water which supersedes all other substances and processes. Coction, calfaction, distillation, sublimation, desiccation, humectation, albefaction, and rubrefaction, are all included in the natural development of this one substance.

xxvii. MOSINUS: The Sages have described our substance, and the method of its preparation, under many names, and thus have led many astray who did not understand our writing. It is composed of red and white sulphur, and of fixed or indestructible water, called permanent water.

xxviii. PLATO: Let it suffice you to dissolve bodies with this water, lest they be burned. Let the substance be washed with living water till all its blackness disappears, and it becomes a white Tincture.

xxix. ORFULUS: First, subject the Matter to gentle coction, of a temperature such as that with which a hen hatches her eggs, lest the moisture be burnt up, and the spirit of our earth destroyed. Let the phial be tightly closed that the earth may crush our substance, and enable its spirit to be extracted. The Sages say that quicksilver is extracted from the flower of our earth, and the water of our fire extracted from two things, and transmuted into our acid. But though they speak of many things, they mean only *one* thing, namely, that indestructible water which *is* our substance, and our acid.

xxx. BATHON: If you know the Matter of our Stone, and the mode of regulating its coction, and the chromatic changes which it undergoes—as though it wished to warn you that its names are as numerous as the colours which it displays—then you may perform the putrefaction, or first coction, which turns our Stone quite black. By this sign you may know that you have the key to our Art, and you will be able to transmute it into the mystic white and red. The Sages say that the Stone dissolves itself, coagulates itself, mortifies itself, and is quickened by its own inherent power, and that it changes itself to black, white, and red, in Christian charity and fundamental truth.

xxxi. BLODIUS. Take the Stone which is found everywhere, and is called Rebis (Two-thing), and grows in two mountains. Take it while it is still fresh, with its own proper blood. Its growth is in its skin, also in its flesh, and its food is in its blood, its habitation in the air. Take of it as much as you like, and plunge it into the Bath.

xxxii. LEAH, the prophetess, writes briefly thus: Know, Nathan that the flower of gold is the Stone; therefore subject it to heat during a certain number of days, till it assumes the dazzling appearance of white marble.

xxxiii. ALKIUS: You daily behold the mountains which contain the husband and wife. Hie you therefore to their caves, and dig up their earth, before it perishes.

xxxiv. BONELLUS: All ye lovers of this Art, I say unto you, in faith and love: Relinquish the multiplicity of your methods and substances, for our substance is one thing, and is called living and indestructible water. He that is led astray by many words will know the persons against whom he should be on his guard.

xxxv. HIERONYMUS: Malignant men have darkened our Art, perverting it with many words; they have called our earth, and our Sun, or gold, by many misleading names. Their salting, dissolving, subliming, growing, pounding, reducing to an acid, and white sulphur, their coction of the fiery vapour, its coagulation, and transmutation into red sulphur, are nothing but different aspects of one and the same thing, which, in its first stage, we may describe as incombustible and indestructible sulphur.

xxxvi. HERMES: Except ye convert the earth of our Matter into fire, our acid will not ascend.

xxxvii. PYTHAGORAS, in his Fourth Table, says: How wonderful is the agreement of Sages in the midst of difference! They all say that they have prepared the Stone out of a substance which by the vulgar is looked upon as the vilest thing on earth. Indeed, if we were to tell the vulgar herd the ordinary name of our substance, they would look upon our assertion as a daring falsehood. But if they were acquainted with its virtue and efficacy, they would not despise that which is, in reality, the most precious thing in the world. God has concealed this mystery from the foolish, the ignorant, the wicked, and the scornful, in order that they may not use it for evil purposes.

xxxviii. HAGIENUS: Our Stone is found in all mountains, all trees, all herbs, and animals, and with all men. It wears many different colours, contains the four elements, and has been designated a microcosm. Can you not see, you ignorant seekers after the Stone, who try, and vainly try, such a multiplicity of substances and methods, that our Stone is one earth, and one sulphur, and that it grows in abundance before your very eyes? I will tell you where you may find it. The first spot is on the summit of two mountains; the second, in all mountains; the third, among the refuse in the street; the fourth, in the trees and metals, the liquid of which is the Sun and Moon, Mercury, Saturn, and Jupiter. There is but one vessel, one method, and one consummation.

xxxix. MORIENUS: Know that our Matter is not in greater agreement with human nature than with anything else, for it is developed by putrefaction and transmutation. If it were not decomposed, nothing could be generated out of it. The goal of our Art is not reached until Sun and Moon are conjoined, and become, as it were, one body.

xl. THE EMERALD TABLE: It is true, without any error, and it is the sum of truth; that which is above is also that which is below, for the performance of the wonders of a certain one thing, and

as all things arise from one Stone, so also they were generated from one common Substance, which includes the four elements created by God. And among other miracles the said Stone is born of the First Matter. The Sun is its Father, the Moon its Mother, the wind bears it in its womb, and it is nursed by the earth. Itself is the Father of the whole earth, and the whole potency thereof. If it be transmuted into earth, then the earth separates from the fire that which is most subtle from that which is hard, operating gently and with great artifice. Then the Stone ascends from earth to heaven, and again descends from heaven to earth, and receives the choicest influences of both heaven and earth. If you can perform this you have the glory of the world, and are able to put to flight all diseases, and to transmute all metals. It overcomes Mercury, which is subtle, and penetrates all hard and solid bodies. Hence it is compared with the world. Hence I am called Hermes, having the three parts of the whole world of philosophy.

xli. LEPRINUS says: The Stone must be extracted from a two-fold substance, before you can obtain the Elixir which is fixed in one essence, and derived from the one indispensable Matter, which God has created, and without which no one can attain the Art. Both these parts must be purified before they are joined together afresh. The body must become different, and so must the volatile spirit. Then you have the Medicine, which restores health, and imparts perfection to all things. The fixed and the volatile principle must be joined in an inseparable union, which defies even the destructive force of fire.

xlii. LAMECH: In the Stone of the Philosophers are the first elements, and the final colours of minerals, or Soul, Spirit, and Body, joined unto one. The Stone which contains all these things is called Zibeth, and the working of Nature has left it imperfect.

xliii. SOCRATES: Our Mystery is the life of all things, or the water. For water dissolves the body into spirit, and summons the living spirit from among the dead. My son, despise not my Practical Injunction. For it gives you, in a brief form, everything that you really need.

xliv. ALEXANDER: The good need not remain concealed on account of the bad men that might abuse it. For God rules over all, according to His Divine Will. Observe, therefore, that the salt of the Stone is derived from mercury, and is that Matter, most excellent of all things, of which we are in search. The same also contains in itself all secrets. Mercury is our Stone, which is composed of the dry and the moist elements, which have been joined together by gentle heat in an inseparable union.

xlv. SENIOR teaches us to make the Salt out of ashes, and then, by various processes, to change it into the Mercury of the Sages, because our Magistry is dependent on our water alone, and needs nothing else.

xlvi. ROSARIUS: It is a stone, and not a stone, viz., the eagle-stone. The substance has in its womb a stone, and when it is dissolved, the water that was coagulated in it bursts forth. Thus the Stone is the extracted spirit of our indestructible body. It contains mercury, or liquid water, in its body, or fixed earth, which retains its nature. This explanation is sufficiently plain.

xlvii. PAMPHILUS: The Salt of the Gem is that which is in its own bowels; it ascends with the water to the top of the alembic, and, after separation, is once more united and made one body with it by means of natural warmth. Or we may, with King Alexander, liken the union to that of a soul with its body.

xlviii. DEMOCRITUS: Our Substance is the conjunction of the dry and the moist elements, which are separated by a vapour or heat, and then transmuted into a liquid like water, in which our Stone is found. For the vapour unites to the most subtle earth the most subtle air, and contains all the most subtle elements. This first substance may be separated into water and earth, the latter being perceptible to the eye. The earth of the vapour is volatile when it ascends, but it is found fixed when the separation takes place, and when the elements are joined together again it becomes fixed mercury. For the enjoyment of this, His precious gift, we Sages ceaselessly praise and bless God's Holy Name.

xlix. SIROS: The body of the Sages, being calcined, is called everlasting water, which permanently coagulates our Mercury. And if the Body has been purified and dissolved, the union is so close as to resist all efforts at separation.

i. NOAH, the man of God, writes thus in his Table: My children and brethren know that no other stone is found in the world that has more virtue than this Stone. No mortal man can find the true Art without this Stone. Blessed be the God of Heaven who has created this property in the Salt, even in the Salt of the Gem!

li. MENALDES: The fire of the Sages may be extracted from all natural things, and is called the quintessence. It is of earth, water, air, and fire. It has no cause of corruption or other contrary quality.

lii. HERMES, in his second Table, writes thus: Dissolve the ashes in the second element, and coagulate this substance into a Stone. Let this be done seven times. For as Naaman the Syrian was purged of his leprosy by washing himself seven times in Jordan, so our substance must undergo a seven-fold cleansing, by calcining and dissolving, and exhibiting a variety of ever deepening colours. In our water are hidden the four elements, and this earth, which swallows its water, is the dragon that swallows its tail, *i.e.*, its strength.

liii. NUNDINUS: The fire which includes all our chemical processes, is three-fold: the fiery element of the air, of water, and of the earth. This is all that our Magistery requires.

liv. ANANIAS: Know, ye Scrutators of Nature, that fire is the soul of everything, and that God Himself is fire and soul. And the body cannot live without fire. For without fire the other elements have no efficacy. It is, therefore, a most holy, awful, and divine fire which abides with God Himself in the Most Holy Trinity, for which also we give eternal thanks to God.

lv. BONIDUS: In the fountain of Nature our Substance is found, and nowhere else upon earth; and our Stone is fire, and has been generated in fire, without, however, being consumed by fire.

lvi. ROSINUS: Two things are hidden in two things, and indicate our Stone: in earth is fire, and air in water, yet there are only two outward things, viz., earth and water. For Mercury is our Stone, consisting as it does both of moist and dry elements. Mercury is dry and moist in its very nature, and all things have their growth from the dry and moist elements.

lvii. GEBER: We cannot find anything permanent, or fixed, in fire, but only viscous natural moisture which is the root of all metals. For our venerable Stone nothing is required but mercurial substances, if they have been well purified by our Art, and are able to resist the fierce heat of fire. This Substance penetrates to the very roots of metals, overcomes their imperfect nature, and transmutes them, according to the virtue of the Elixir, or Medicine.

lviii. AROS: Our Medicine consists of two things, and one essence. There is one Mercury, of a fixed and a volatile substance, composed of body and spirit, cold and moist, warm and dry.

lix. ARNOLDUS: Let your only care be to regulate the coction of the Mercurial substance. In proportion as it is itself dignified shall it dignify bodies.

lx. ALPHIDIUS: Transmute the nature, and you will find what you want. For in our Magistery we obtain first from the gross the subtle, or the spirit; then from the moist the dry, *i.e.*, earth from water. Thus we transmute the corporeal into the spiritual, and the spiritual into the corporeal, the lowest into the highest, and the highest into the lowest.

lxi. BERNARDUS: The middle substance is nothing but coagulated mercury; and the first Matter is nothing but twofold mercury. For our Medicine is composed of two things, the fixed and the volatile, the corporeal and the spiritual, the cold and the warm, the moist and the dry. Mercury must be subjected to coction in a vessel with three divisions, that the dryness of the active fire may be changed into vaporous moisture of the oil that surrounds the substance. Ordinary fire does not digest our substance, but its heat converted into dryness is the true fire.

lxii. STEPHANUS: Metals are earthly bodies, and are generated in water. The water extracts a vapour from the Stone, and out of the moisture of [the] earth, by the operation of the Sun, God lets gold grow and accumulate. Thus earth and water are united into a metallic body.

lxiii. GUIDO BONATUS writes briefly concerning the quintessence, as being purer than all elements. The quintessence contains the four elements, that is, the first Matter, out of which God has created, and still creates, all things. It is Hyle, containing in a confused mixture the properties of every creature.

lxiv. ALRIDOS: The virtue and efficacy of everything is to be found in its quintessence, whether its nature be warm, cold, moist, or dry. This quintessence gives out the sweetest fragrance that can be imagined. Therefore the highest perfection is needed.

lxv. LONGINUS describes the process in the following terms: Let your vessel be tightly closed and exposed to an even warmth. This water is prepared in dry ashes, and is subjected to coction till the two become one. When one is joined to the other, the body is brought back to its spirit.

Then the fire must be strengthened till the fixed body retains that which is not fixed by its own heat. With this you can tinge ten thousand times ten thousand of other substances.

lxvi. HERMES, in his Mysteries, says: Know that our Stone is lightly esteemed by the thankless multitude; but it is very precious to the Sages. If princes knew how much gold can be made out of a particle of Sun, and of our Stone, they would never suffer it to be taken out of their dominions. "The Sages rejoice when the bodies are dissolved; for our Stone is prepared with two waters. It drives away all sickness from the diseased body, whether it be human or metallic." By means of our Art, we do in one month what Nature cannot accomplish in a thousand years: for we purify the parts, and then join them together in an inseparable and indissoluble union.

lxvii. NERO: Know that our Mercury is dry and moist, and conjoined with the Sun and Moon. Sun and Moon in nature are cold and moist mercury and hot and dry sulphur, and both have their natural propagation by being joined in one thing.